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THE RELATION OF
CHRISTIANITY TO HINDUISM.

BY

REV. DR. CALDWELL,

*Missionary S.P.C., Tinnevely, India, Honorary Member of the Royal Asiatic
Society, Fellow of the Madras University.*



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THE RELATION OF CHRISTIANITY TO HINDUISM.

IT might perhaps be expected that I should avail myself of this opportunity to supply some information respecting the progress and prospects of Christian Missions in India, or to discuss some questions that have arisen respecting their organization and management; and this would probably have been my own opinion of what was desirable, had it not been for the importance which certain more general questions—affecting the relation of Christianity itself to the religions of the world, and especially its relation to the Oriental systems of religion—have lately assumed. The view of this subject which seems to be prevailing more and more amongst the literary and scientific classes, and to which utterance appeared to me to be given a few weeks ago, at the International Congress of Orientalists, by one of the most distinguished scholars and men of letters of our time¹—that view would lead, I believe, either to the abandonment of missions altogether, or to their being left exclusively in the hands of persons who have “a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” Missions and missionaries were, it is true, spoken of on the occasion referred to with the greatest respect; a wish was expressed that where

¹ See Appendix, p. 16.

there is one missionary now there should be ten ; and a recommendation was made of a more thoroughgoing character than anything that has yet been proposed, as far as I am aware, even by the conductors of missionary societies themselves, to the effect that a considerable number of the non-resident fellowships at the universities should be utilised for sending out missionaries to various parts of the mission field. This being the case, and our thanks being undoubtedly due to the learned professor for his excellent proposition, it might seem ungracious and unreasonable to express any dissatisfaction ; and yet I must say I have found it impossible to feel altogether satisfied. I have felt it impossible to refrain from availing myself of the opportunity this Church Congress affords to avow my conviction that what appeared to me to be abandoned was of greater value than what was retained. As "life is more than meat, and the body than raiment," so Christianity itself is of greater value than missions. Christianity is of more importance than the system of means instituted for the purpose of propagating it in the world ; and this being so, if Christianity should come to be regarded, not as a divine gift to mankind, not as a divinely-ordained remedy for human sin and sorrow, but virtually as a human invention, as springing, equally with all other religions, from what is termed "the sacred soil of the human heart"—if this idea should spread, if it should dominate the minds of educated men, the result would be, not merely that missionary zeal would decay—not merely that where there are ten missionaries now in the field we should scarcely be able to retain one, but that it would be impossible for missionary zeal ever to revive ; seeing that Christianity itself, or everything of importance we understand when we speak of Christianity—everything that makes Christianity precious to earnest, devout minds—everything that makes Christianity a power in the world—everything that makes it worthy of being retained, worthy of being propagated—everything which makes it worth living for, worth dying for—would have passed away.

In the remarks I am about to make, illustrative of this view of the question, respecting the Oriental systems of

religion as contrasted with Christianity, I intend to restrict myself to Hinduism or Brahmanism, the religion of the people of India, though much that I have to say would apply equally well *mutatis mutandis*, to Buddhism.

Very different estimates of Hinduism have been formed at different times, and by different persons at the same time. There was a time when persons who wrote about Hinduism too generally fell into the error of indiscriminate depreciation. That period has passed away, and the error into which people at present, as it appears to me, are too apt to fall, is that of indiscriminate laudation. The amount of what is good in Hinduism, as in the character of the Indian people and the structure of Indian society, is often at present exaggerated; and we are called upon, not only to respect that which is good, which is perfectly fair and right, but also to ignore that which is evil, or to forget that the evil is greatly in excess of the good. We seem sometimes, also, to be called upon to regard evil not as evil, but as goodness of a grotesque or unusual type. A very misleading impression might be produced by a series of extracts taken skilfully from the sacred books of the Hindus. It would be easy to select—say from that great storehouse of Indian traditions, the Mahá-Bhárata—a series of extracts which should contain moral and religious teaching of a very high order; but if it were desired that a perfectly fair estimate should be formed, it would be necessary to explain that such extracts represented only an exceedingly small proportion of the contents of the book, and that much that it contained was so bad—so deeply tinged with low, tricky morality and indecency—that it has been found to be a practical difficulty—as is the case also with many other similar books—to select any consecutive portions suitable in length, and not morally unsuitable, for the Indian University examinations.

I recognise in Hinduism three elements which have contributed in various degrees to make it what it is. First, there is the merely human element, which manifests itself in principles, sentiments, and practices, which appear to be the legitimate outcome of Indian human nature. Our estimate of this, the preponderating element in Hinduism, will depend

very much on the estimate of human nature we are accustomed to form. One estimate of the heart, man's moral nature, is that it is "a sacred soil," from which everything that is good and lovely, including the Christian religion itself, naturally springs. Another estimate of the heart is that "it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and may I not add, that if we look around us and look within, this is the estimate which we shall find to be correct? As water, therefore, cannot rise above the level of its source, so we may reasonably conclude that the merely human element in Hinduism will not be found to rise above the characteristics—good in part, but evil in the main—of the source from which it emanates.

I recognise also in Hinduism a higher element, an element which I cannot but regard as divine, struggling with what is earthly and evil in it, and frequently overborne, though never entirely destroyed. I trace the operation of this divine element in the religiousness—the habit of seeing God in all things, and all things in God—which has formed so marked a characteristic of the people of India during every period of their history. I trace it in the conviction that there is a God, however erroneously His attributes may be conceived, in or through whom all things have their being; in the conviction that a religion is possible, desirable, necessary; in the conviction that men are somehow separated from God, and need somehow to be united to Him; but especially in the idea I have found universally entertained, that a remedy for the ills of life, an explanation of its difficulties and mysteries, and an appointment of a system of means for seeking God's favour and rising to a higher life—that is, a revelation—is to be expected; nay, more, that such a revelation has been given, the only doubt being as to which of the existing revelations is the true one, or the more directly divine. Nor need we hesitate to recognise in such ideas a divine origin, seeing that in human society, and especially in the domain of morals, we may always and everywhere see a Divine purpose working itself into shape. But irrespective of such considerations, I am persuaded that much of what I have referred to may be traced to a distinctively Christian source. When I

look at some of the secondary developments of Hinduism, as, for example, the doctrine of incarnations—the incarnation especially of Krishna, which is so evidently founded on a distorted version of the gospel history of Christ ; the doctrine of faith, of grace, of the relation of faith to works, of the relation of divine grace to the human will in salvation—it appears to me in the highest degree probable that we have before us a result of the contact of the Indian mind with the Christianity of the West at some period prior to the commencement of modern missions, though when and how this contact took place is at present uncertain.

It is strange that it is at this point—not in connection with the merely human element in Hinduism—that we are confronted with the most remarkable evidence of the existence in it of an element which can scarcely be described otherwise than as diabolical. One of the worst things in modern India is the sensual worship of Krishna, as practised by some of the more enthusiastic sects ; and this appears to be mainly an imitation of one of the highest developments of Christian devoutness—the personal love of the soul to the Divine Saviour of men. That which appeared to be most truly divine in its origin has become earthly, sensual, if not actually devilish, by contact with impure minds. Allied to this, though still more detestable, is the worship of the *sakti*, or female energy, by the left-hand division of one of the Saiva sects. I cannot do otherwise than place in this bad category that element in Hinduism which, under the venerated name of Religion, teaches immorality, either by precept or by representing divine personages as licentious, cruel, or otherwise immoral, or by giving licentious, cruel, or otherwise immoral practices a place in divine worship. There is hardly a virtue that is not praised in some Indian book ; but, on the other hand, there is hardly a crime that is not encouraged by the example of some Indian divinity. I think I may safely also assign a place in this category to the worship of devils or evil spirits, which so extensively prevails in some parts of India, and which, though independent of Brahmanism in its origin, and probably anterior to it, has been amalgamated with it as one of the authorised developments of Saivism. It is not

my purpose at present to treat of Buddhism, but I cannot avoid saying in passing that, whilst I respect the morality of Buddhism, and admire its compassion for suffering humanity, I regard as more deplorable than anything in Hinduism that element in Buddhism which, under the name of supernatural illumination, teaches atheism, nihilism, and despair.

If we wish to form a just estimate of Hinduism, we must beware of founding our judgment on the Vedas, the system of religion contained in which is at present of little more than antiquarian interest. We must beware, also, of founding our judgment on the Indian philosophies ; for though these philosophies profess to be the innermost essence of the Indian systems of religion, and though their influence on all classes, down almost to the lowest, is greater than that of any other systems of philosophy in any other part of the world, I regard them as in reality independent of religion altogether. Vedantism, for example, is simply the extremest development of idealism, and a Vedantist might be either a Vaishnava or a Saiva. It is not inconceivable even that he should be a Mohammedan or a Christian. If we wish to form an accurate estimate of Hinduism as a religion, we must found our judgment on the forms in which it manifests itself in daily life among the masses, and the tone of mind and style of character it produces. We must judge it by its fruits. Judging of Hinduism in this way, the conclusion to be deduced from the actual facts of the case is, that it is the source of many of the worst evils the country endures, and the chief obstacle to its enlightenment and moral progress ; and hence, that its disappearance from the stage, and the spread of Christianity instead, would be as life from the dead. Christianity would be the best realization of the visions of its seers, and the best fulfilment of the longings of its sages. It would deliver that which is good in it from the bondage of corruption, it would enable it to cast out that which is evil, and it would dissipate the clouds which hide from it the face of God.

“ Immortal EAST ! dear land of glorious lays !
See here the ‘ Unknown God ’ of thy unconscious praise.”

It would be an error to suppose that missionaries are now

for the first time learning to take up this attitude towards Hinduism. They have long used extracts from Indian books of authority, not merely for the purpose of showing that those books in many important particulars contradict one another, but also for the much higher purpose of showing that Christianity is not, as Hindus are apt to fancy, an outlandish novelty, but is in reality in accordance with the best sentiments of India's best minds. They have avoided, however, the error into which some men of letters, not missionaries, have fallen—like the late author of an interesting book entitled *Dravidian Folk Songs*—the error of over-estimating the proportion of what is good in Hindu writings, and virtually ignoring the existence of what is evil in them, though the evil be ten times greater in amount than the good, and a hundred times more popular and influential.

It appears to me that we miss the purpose Divine Providence has in view in giving us the position we have in India, if we content ourselves with eulogising what we consider to be good, without endeavouring to help the people to condemn and reject what is evil. There are not a few of our native fellow-subjects in India who have acquired sufficient enlightenment to perceive and approve what is good; but unhappily we often find the same persons timid in carrying out what they approve into practice, and far too tolerant of evil; in consequence of which, though there is much room for reform in every department of things in India—in social usages, in morals, and in religion—most Hindus gladly welcome any excuse for letting things remain, as they are.

I fear this will be the result of the manner in which what is termed the science of religion has recently been studied in this country. The Indian mind will welcome anything which seems to deprive Christianity of its authority; and when Christianity sinks in the scale, it is not the Brahma Samáj—it is not the religion of nature—but Hinduism, with all its absurdities and immoralities, that will rise.

I have no objection whatever to the application of the comparative method to the study of religions. On the contrary, if only the comparison be fairly made, I am convinced that whatever religion may suffer, Christianity will not suffer

but will gain. What I think open to objection is a comparison which attempts to prove the absence of essential differences between the things compared, by the easy process of omitting essential differences. I cannot think a comparison of religions fairly conducted when the Christianity which is compared with the religions of the world appears to be a Christianity denuded of its most essential characteristics—a Christianity without the Incarnation and the Resurrection, a Christianity without the Cross, a Christianity without Christ. To omit, whether directly or by implication, these characteristics of historic Christianity would, as it appears to me, be as unscientific as to omit the consideration of specific differences in the classification of zoological or botanical species. Man's position in the world cannot fairly be determined if we describe him only by those physical qualities which he possesses in common with the rest of the animal creation, without taking into account his conscious intelligence, his power of speech, his reason, his sense of moral obligation, his capacity for religion ; in virtue of which endowments he claims, and justly claims, to have been made in the image of God. May I not carry out the parallel by affirming, that as man is God's interpreter to nature, so Christianity is God's interpreter to man ; and that what man is amongst the birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things, that, and a great deal more, is Christianity amongst the religions and superstitions of mankind. Christianity possesses undoubtedly elements in common with other religions ; but if compared with others fairly, and in a truly scientific spirit, it will be found that it occupies not only the highest position, but a position perfectly unique. It will be found that it testifies of itself that it is divine by teaching men of their relation to God and of God's relation to them, and of sin and salvation, as no other religion does or ever did.

The essential differences between Christianity and other religions, and the propriety of acquiring a firm grasp of those differences, will appear, I think, in a clear light when I endeavour to show how we should have to proceed if we wished to induce an intelligent Hindu, unacquainted with English, not merely to think favourably of Christianity, but to become a Christian. It is those very points in which Christianity

differs from and excels every other religion which furnish us with the line of argument which we shall find most effectual.

It used to be asserted some years ago, that the reason why Christianity made so little progress amongst the higher classes in India was because missionaries were generally unacquainted with Hindu philosophy; and accordingly they were recommended to apply themselves to the study of the principal philosophical systems, in order that they might be enabled to present Christianity to learned Hindus in a philosophical dress. I do not consider that view of things correct. I have always, it is true, advocated the study of the rudiments, at least, of the Indian philosophies, but for a different and much humbler reason—simply in order that missionaries might understand the intellectual ground of the attachment of the educated classes to their own religion, and their aversion to Christianity, or at least that they might understand the meaning of the hard words they were so fond of using, and in which they appeared to think there was so much wisdom and weight. To this extent I still think the study of the Hindu philosophies desirable; there are cases in which I think it necessary; not, however, for the purpose of providing the missionary with a weapon in his spiritual warfare, for the best of all weapons is in his hands already, but merely for the sake of self-defence. Whatever he may know of philosophy, whether eastern or western, the sooner he can succeed in setting philosophical questions aside and grappling with the conscience the better; for it is always found that opposition to the Gospel, from whatever quarter it may proceed, is best met by the Gospel itself.

In dealing with Hindus ignorant of English—and the same will hold good also with respect to most of those who know English—what are called the external evidences of Christianity, that is, evidences and arguments founded on history, or which presuppose some knowledge of history, will be found to fall flat on the ear. Something worthy of being called history exists in Cashmere, in the extreme north, and Ceylon, in the extreme south; but in India proper not a single narrative that can properly be called history has ever been written by Hindus. History has always been discouraged in India by the

prevalence of idealistic philosophies. Why should people care to record the events of a merely ideal world? Hence the history of the Bible, the history of Christianity, the history of the Church, will rarely be found to impress the Hindu mind. Miracles, to carry conviction, must be performed in the presence of the people; prophecies must be uttered in their hearing and fulfilled in their sight. For other reasons it is obviously out of place to attempt to speak to persons who have not yet accepted the rudiments of the faith, of the Christian mysteries, of the means of grace, of the Christian life; and worse than out of place to speak to them of points which are subjects of controversy amongst Christians.

It requires no acquaintance with Hindu philosophy on our part, or of history on the part of the Hindus, to enable us to make use of some of the internal evidences of Christianity. It will be possible to show that Christianity is the most reasonable religion in the world, the religion which is most conducive to enlightenment, progress, order, and peace, the religion which is professed by the most cultivated nations in the world, so that civilization and Christianity are almost conterminous. We get upon higher ground when we show that Christianity is the only religion which is suited to every country, race, and class; that it aims at the peaceful conquest of the whole earth; and that now, nineteen centuries after its first appearance in the world, it is as full of missionary zeal as it was during any previous period of its history. We may dwell with still greater advantage on the high moral teaching contained in the Holy Scriptures—the zeal for righteousness which breathes and burns in every portion of the Old Testament; and which, instead of waxing cold in the New, burns therein with an intenser fervour, and with a radiance which is all the lovelier because it seeks to save, not to destroy. Never perhaps is the immense superiority of Christianity to Hinduism more distinctly apparent than when we compare the Hindu incarnations—the best of them incarnations of manly courage, the worst of them incarnations of lasciviousness—with the incarnation of moral goodness, the incarnation of truth and purity, the incarnation of self-sacrificing love, exhibited to the world in Christ. We are on safe ground also, as well as on high ground,

when we show that Christian teaching is the only moral and religious teaching in the world which rises above the level of ordinary human nature. It does not swim with the stream of human ideas and inclinations, but firmly resists that stream. It gives us a higher purpose of life and higher motives, and sets itself thereby to raise us to a higher level. It is so much higher than anything we suppose to be high in ourselves, and so much better than anything we suppose to be good in ourselves, that we cannot but conclude that it must have proceeded from Him from whom we ourselves proceeded, and to whom we have to prepare to return.

These considerations will be intelligible to all educated Hindus, whether acquainted with English or not, and some of them will be found to be intelligible even to the uneducated. Each of them, I believe, is valid and sound as far as it goes, though it is admitted that they are of different degrees of value. Taking them altogether they ought to carry conviction; and yet it is often found that conviction produced by these considerations does not necessitate conversion. The considerations I have mentioned are regarded as hardly sufficient to prove that it is absolutely necessary that every man should become a Christian. The acceptance of Christianity as a religion may, it is supposed, after all, be optional. It may only be like the offer of a luxury of a high order, the acceptance of which may be left to a man's own discretion. These considerations hardly reach the conscience, in its dealings with which it is that Christianity proves itself to be a moral necessity. Hence, without excluding these considerations, but without relying too much upon them, without allowing them to occupy a disproportionate share of the attention, it is the missionary's chief aim—now, as in the earliest days of the Gospel—to bring to bear upon the conscience all that is included in the doctrine of Salvation by the Cross. His first work is to convince of sin, to show that moral evil is not a legitimate acting out of the law of our constitution, but is rebellion against the highest element in our constitution—conscience, the voice of God within—and therefore rebellion against God. He has then to show that Christianity, the only religion that treats man as a sinner, is also the only religion which brings man the good

news of salvation from sin. In the Cross of Christ we see a means whereby moral evil may be expiated—that is, so forgiven that the forgiveness does not violate, but illustrates and confirms the moral order of the world; and in the communication of the Spirit of Christ to all who lay hold of the Cross we see a means whereby evil habits may be overcome, the mind cleansed, and new love, new life obtained. Thus Christianity sets itself first to produce an imperative sense of want, and then to supply that want, and all wants, out of the fulness that is in Christ. Hence, instead of being regarded as one religion out of many, better than others, diviner than others, but not on that account necessary to be adopted by every man, Christianity claims to be regarded—as indeed it is—as the only religion which fulfils the purposes for which a religion is required—as the only religion which reconciles man to God, as the only religion which produces not merely moral amendment, but spiritual renovation, as the only religion which brings salvation. It claims, therefore, to be a religion which every man is bound to adopt in accordance with the good purpose of the goodness of Him who tasted death for every man. It asks admission into every human heart, not as a suppliant, but on the authority of the highest law.

The sketch I have now given of the use that might be made by a missionary, especially by a missionary to India, of the particulars in which Christianity differs from all other religions, may suffice to show what a grievous wrong is done to it when other religions, whether avowedly or by implication, are placed on a level with this the best gift of God to mankind, and also what an amount of damage would be inflicted on the missionary cause if the Divine authority and essential characteristics of Christianity were ignored. Better that missionaries were left without the kind wishes for their success that have been expressed, than that they should be tempted to let go the principles that impel them to go forth into the field, the banner under which they fight, and the weapons with which their success is achieved. Deprive Christianity of Christ's divinity and atonement—let the Cross of Christ cease to be the centre of the Christian system—and the doctrines that remain will cease to have any power to

attract. No heart will be stirred to devotion, no hand will be nerved for missionary enterprise, by a Christianity without Christ. Sceptics themselves cannot but admit that the only strong, zealous Christianity—the only Christianity that propagates itself—is the Christianity of which a Divine saving Christ is the sun and centre; and when they look back with regret, as their poems show that they sometimes do, on what they have lost in losing faith in Christianity, it is the disappearance from their minds and hearts of the Christ of the Gospels that they always regard with keenest regret.

It was very gratifying to a missionary to hear so warm an eulogy pronounced by so distinguished a scholar, both at the Orientalists' Congress, and last December at Westminster Abbey, on the late martyred missionary bishop of Melanesia. But methinks that the lessons that might be drawn from Bishop Patteson's career were not quite exhausted on either of these occasions. Why was it that that devoted man loved the islanders he laboured amongst so well that he would not allow them to be called savages, but considered them brethren, and that he was content, if it were God's will, as it proved to be, that he should die at their hands? We know the secret of his love. He loved because he had been loved. Take away his belief in the Cross—take away his belief in Christ's love to himself and the world—and he never would have given up the delights of an English career to spend and be spent for their welfare, as he did. If we appreciate the result, should we not also appreciate the cause?

APPENDIX.

(See pp. 3 and 15.)

Two Extracts from the Inaugural Address of Professor MAX MÜLLER, to the Aryan Section of the International Congress of Orientalists, assembled in London, in September, 1874. With remarks thereon.

FIRST EXTRACT.

“THE second claim we prefer is on Missionary Societies. I have incurred very severe obloquy for my supposed hostility to missionary enterprise. All I can say is, I wish that there were ten missionaries for every one we have now. I have always counted missionaries among my best friends. I have again and again acknowledged how much Oriental studies, and linguistic studies in general, owe to them, and I am proud to say that, even now, while missionaries at home have abused me in unmeasured language, missionaries abroad, devoted, hard-working missionaries, have thanked me for what I said of them and their work in my lay-sermon in Westminster Abbey last December.

“Now it seems to me that, first of all, our universities, and I think again chiefly of Oxford, might do much more for missions than they do at present. If we had a sufficient staff of professors for Eastern languages, we could prepare young missionaries for this work, and should be able to send out from time to time such men as Patteson, the Bishop of Melanesia, who was every inch an Oxford man. And in these missionaries we have not only apostles of religion and civilization, but at the same time the most valuable pioneers of scientific research. I know there are some authorities at home who declare that such a combination is impossible, or at least undesirable, that a man cannot serve two masters, and that a missionary must do his own work and nothing else. Nothing, I believe, can be more mistaken. First of all, some of our most efficient missionaries have been those who have done also the most excellent work as scholars; and whenever I have conversed on the subject with missionaries who have seen active service, they all agree that they cannot be converting all day long, and that nothing is more refreshing and invigorating to them than some literary or scientific work. Now what I should like to see is this: I should like to see ten or twenty of our non-resident fellowships, which at present are doing more harm than good, assigned to missionary work, to be given to young men who have taken their degree, and who, whether laymen or clergymen, are willing to work as assistant missionaries on distant stations, with the distinct understanding that they should devote some of their

time to scientific work, whether the study of languages, or flowers, or stars, and that they should send home every year some account of their labours. These men would be like scientific consuls, to whom students at home might apply for information and help. They would have opportunities of distinguishing themselves by really useful work, far more than in London, and after ten years they might either return to Europe with a well established reputation, or if they find that they have a real call for missionary work, devote all their life to it. Though to my own mind there is no nobler work than that of a missionary, yet I believe that some such connexion with the universities and men of science would raise their position, would call out more general interest, and secure to the missionary cause the good will of those whose will is apt to become law."

SECOND EXTRACT.

"The same comparative method has been applied to the study of religion also. All religions are Oriental, and with the exception of the Christian, their sacred books are all written in Oriental languages. The materials, therefore, of a comparative study of the religious systems of the world had all to be supplied by Oriental scholars. But far more important than those materials is the spirit in which they have been treated. The sacred books of the principal religions of mankind had to be placed side by side with perfect impartiality, in order to discern the points which they shared in common, as well as those that are peculiar to each. The results already obtained by this simple juxtaposition are full of important lessons, and the fact that the truths on which all religions agree far excel those in which they differ, has hardly been sufficiently appreciated. I feel convinced, however, that the time will come when those who at present profess to be most disquieted by our studies will be the most grateful for our support; for having shown by evidence which cannot be controverted, that all religions spring from the same sacred soil—the human heart; that all are quickened by the same divine spirit, the still, small voice; and that, though the outward forms of religion may change—may wither and decay, yet, as long as man is what he is, and what he has been, he will postulate again and again the Infinite as the very condition of the Finite—he will yearn for something which the world cannot give; he will feel his weakness and dependence, and in that weakness and dependence discover the deepest sources of his hope and trust and strength.

"A patient study of the sacred scriptures of the world is what is wanted at present more than anything else, in order to clear our own ideas of the origin, the nature, the purposes of religion. There can be no science of one religion, but there can be a science of many. We have learnt already one lesson, that behind the helpless expressions which language has devised, whether in the East or in the

West, for uttering the unutterable—be it *Dyaushpitâ* or *Ahuramazda*, be it *Jehovah* or *Allah*, be it the All or the Nothing, be it the First Cause or Our Father in Heaven—there is the same intention, the same striving, the same stammering, the same faith. Other lessons will follow, till in the end we shall be able to restore that ancient bond which unites not only the East with the West, but all the members of the human family, and may learn to understand what a Persian poet meant when he wrote many centuries ago (I quote from Mr. Conway's 'Sacred Anthology'): 'Diversity of worship has divided the human race into seventy-two nations. From among all their dogmas I have selected one—the Love of God.'

These extracts speak for themselves, and show that there was ample reason both for the gratification I expressed, as a humble representative of the missionary cause, respecting one portion of the learned professor's address, and also for regarding another portion of it, both as a missionary and as a Christian, with deep regret.

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to assure the reader,—acquainted, as he must be, with the devices of controversial rhetoric—that the "very severe obloquy" said to have been incurred by the professor for his "supposed hostility to missionary enterprise," is merely a figure of speech; or that when he says that "missionaries at home have abused him in unmeasured language, &c., &c., for what he said of them and their work," he only means that if they had expressed any opinion whatever—which they do not appear to have done—they would probably have said, that whilst they thanked him for his warm advocacy of their cause, they would have considered a right appreciation of the origin, nature, and claims of the religion they were commissioned to teach preferable to praise of themselves or their work.

I admire, as much as the professor, the beauty of the sentiment expressed by the Persian poet, but when I am asked to set myself "to learn to understand what he meant," I find myself met at the outset by a practical discouragement. What the poet appears to have meant is not by any means in accordance with historical facts. It is not a fact that the love of God is a dogma common to all religions; on the contrary, it is a fact—whatever be the nature of the inference

we choose to draw from it—that, apart from the teachings of the Bible, and those systems of religion which have derived what is best and highest in them, directly or indirectly from the Bible, the love of God is a dogma which the world has never known. “The science of religion,” if it wishes to be regarded, not as a poetical dream, but as a science, must take care not to ignore facts like this. It is equally desirable that it should be remembered that, when the love of God is spoken of, the existence of a God who loves and who is capable of being loved, must necessarily be presupposed. Whatever may be the case in India, in these days, in Europe God's only rivals are “the All” and “the Nothing;” but surely it is unscientific and misleading to class these abstract generalizations with “Our Father in heaven,” as emanating from “the same intention, the same faith,” and as equally with Him to be loved. “The All” is incapable either of loving or of being loved. According to the representations of those who have set it up in the place of God, it is not a loving Father, but a mere unconscious machine, with dreadful teeth, partly concealed by flowers, which grinds out good and evil, happiness and misery, with impartial unconcern. As for the alternative divinity mentioned by the professor with so much apparent respect, “the Nothing”—whether the Nothing of the Buddhists or the Nothing of the atheists—it differs in nothing, as far as I can see, from nothing, except in being dignified with a capital N; and certainly whatever else may be said in praise of Nothing by those who are believers in Nothing, they will scarcely venture to say that it claims their love.

HEREIN IS LOVE; NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT GOD LOVED US, AND GAVE HIS SON TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS.

This is the true *differentia* of the Christian religion, and the true foundation and justification of the missionary enterprise.

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